

TEACHING PRESCHOOLERS

When it comes to teaching, sharing the truth of God's Word is our goal. But to be honest with you, we need to take it a step further. We need to share God's Word in such a way that the child is really learning the truth. This takes time and preparation.

LESSON PREPARATION

- Start to prepare **early** in the week.
- Read the story from **the Bible** and ask God to teach you as you read it.
- Practice **out loud**. Sometimes we think we know the sequence and details of a familiar story until we begin saying it aloud.
- Recognize **unfamiliar concepts** and plan how to express them to children. Children of today may not relate to some customs and objects common in Bible times. For example, children don't know the concept of the Tabernacle, but can understand a church inside a big tent. They may not understand how Hannah could "give her child away" to live at the temple, but they can understand that Hannah took Samuel to the church to help Eli and to learn things from him.
- **Time yourself** as you prepare the story. Preschoolers have a limited attention span-around 1 minute per year of age.
- Plan to employ the **senses of the child**. Think like a child and ask yourself if there is a way to bring the story to life for the children with a smell or a sound or a visual.
- Know the "**moral of the story**". Many children are familiar with the events in a Bible story before they come into the classroom. Your goal should not only be to tell the events of the story, but to give the children a simple way to apply the truth of the story to their lives. If the story is David and Goliath, children can learn that God can help them to be brave and do the right thing, even if they're afraid, such as telling the truth rather than lying.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- "How did God/Jesus help someone in this story?"
- "How can God/Jesus help a child today in the same way?"
- "What emotions are in this story and how can children relate to those emotions at their age?"

LESSON DELIVERY

- Have your **Bible open** as you teach and remind the children that every story in the Bible is true!
- **Own the story!** Be excited at how God worked in the story and be eager to share this news with the children.

- Use a **catchy introduction**. Try to avoid introducing the story with a statement like “Okay boys and girls, let’s get quiet and listen to our story”. Be creative with how you introduce the Bible story.
 - Open up with a demonstration of some emotion in the story.....a gasp, a pretend weep, an expression of excitement...
 - Whisper
 - Involve the children in the introduction. “Let’s all close our eyes and listen for heavy footsteps....when you hear them, raise your hand. Today our story is about David and a big, big man named Goliath”. OR “Raise your hand if you have ever been to a grocery store! Today, our story is about how Elijah got food even when there was no grocery store for him to go to”.
 - Use a visual to introduce the story and then put it away while the story is being told. Bring it back out during review.
- Use simple **props/visuals**.
 - Pictures
 - Felt Board
 - Stick Puppets
 - Demonstration props can be used at a certain point in the story.
 - Object props can be used throughout the story.
 - Give children paper and crayon to follow instructions as you tell the story.
 - Assign reactions and responses so the children can participate as you tell the story. For example, you may say, “Boys and girls, when I tell the story, every time you hear me say leper, I want you to say, ‘aw how sad’”.
- Use **your body** as part of the storytelling.
 - limited and simple **gestures** (a clap, a point, motion...)
 - **Eye and face** expressions
 - **Voice** fluctuations to indicate emotion and mood.
 - A special voice to **represent one character** in the story.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- Halt at the climax. **Pause** a few seconds at the end of your story to draw attention to the personal application.
- Ask open **ended questions** that will draw out of them what they understood about the lesson. For example, “How do you think David felt when he saw Goliath?” “What are some times that you have felt afraid? God can help you be brave when you are afraid”.
- Use **puppets, flannel characters, or a personal story** to apply the truth.